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The Mizan Newsletter aims at giving an objective and balanced account of current Soviet writings on the Middle East

Two articles in this issue review Soviet Writing on the Lebanon. The first emphasizes the historical continuity of Russian interest in the Lebanon and the Levant countries in general. Until recently Soviet writers have presented the Lebanon as overwhelmingly dominated, both economically and politically, by Western influence. But Soviet historians are now taking a new look at the history of the Lebanon's independence movement (together with that of Syria); and the present Lebanese Government's policy, since its rejection of the Eisenhower doctrine, has received the approval of Soviet political commentators as tending to reduce Lebanese dependence on the West.

The second article, A Lebanese Writer's Memories of Russia, is based on a recent SOVREMENNY VOSTOK article which reviewed the life and opinions of Mikhail Naymeh, a Lebanese author who was educated in pre-revolutinary Russia and has since visited and written about the Soviet Union.

Mikoyan's Visit to Iraq has been much publicized in Soviet newspapers, and reports on it are reviewed in an appendix to this issue. Other matters covered in Soviet Angle on the News are an Iraqi trade unionist's complaint about the situation of the trade unions in Basrah; the Cleopatra affair; King Husayn's visit to Tehran; the forthcoming exchange of visits between Menderes and Khrushchev; and the internal situation in Turkey.

Soviet interest in the Levant countries has a considerable tradition behind it. The Tsarist Russian Government claimed the right to protect Orthodox Christians in these countries, when they were part of the Ottoman Empire. In one of the most revealing documents on Russia's Eastern policy in the 19th century, the British Minister Sir George Hamilton Seymour's account of his conversation with the Tsar Nicholas I on 14th January 1853, the Tsar is quoted as saying: "In that Empire (the Ottoman Empire) there are several millions of Christians whose interests I am called upon to watch over, while the right of doing so is secured to me by Treaty."

The links between the Russian and Syrian Orthodox Churches are not forgotten in Soviet Russia today; in 1959 the visit to the Soviet Union of the Patriarch of Antioch and the East, Theodosius VI, was noted in an article in NEW TIMES (No.32), which observed that "Theodosius VI has stated time and again that his aim is to promote closer links between the Antioch and the Russian Orthodox Churches". A collection of Arab studies published in 1959 by the Soviet Institute of Oriental Studies (UCHENYYE ZAPISKI Vol.XIX) contains an account of documents in the Central State Historical Archive in Leningrad which illustrate various episodes in relations between Russia and the Levant countries in the years 1818-1911. One of these is the foundation of the first Orthodox religious seminary in the monastery of Belemend near Tripoli. Another is the offer made by the Patriarch Gregorius of Antioch in 1908 to present to the Russian Government a collection of ancient Syrian manuscripts, which was "necessary because of the increasingly hostile activity of Catholic circles against the Orthodox Church, and in particular of the Order of Jesuits, which has been plundering these valuable manuscripts".

While these traditions of Russian interest in the Levant countries have survived into the Soviet era, it seems that one can also detect traces of the old confessional animosities. For example, the Maronite community of the Lebanon has received little favourable mention in Soviet writings. The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia (1954) says that the Marenites are ruled by "feudalists and comprador bourgeoisie"; alleges that the Maronite monasteries and higher clergy are among "the greatest exploiters"; and says that the Maronite feudalists and big bourgeois were agents of France since the 17th century, and were an instrument of French colonial expansion in the 19th and 20th centuries. In PEOPLES OF SOUTH-WEST ASIA (1957) V.B. Lutskiy significantly remarks that the Orthodox community of the Lebanon, unlike the Maronites, has no feudal aristocracy.

In a different sphere, Russia's interest in the Levant was shown in the foundation in 1882 of the Russian Palestine Society, which was active in the Lebanon and Syria as well as in Palestine; it built hospitals and dispensaries, ran schools and conducted archaeological research. Russians and Arabs taught in its schools, and its Arab teachers went to Russia for training. Lutskiy contrasts the achievements of the French and the

Russian schools in the Lebanon; the aim of the former, he says, was "to train agents", whereas the Russian schools were "nurseries of the democratic ideas characteristic of Russian progressive literature and culture".

The birth of nationalism In Soviet writing on the Lebanon, if anywhere, one might expect to find some recognition of the influence of European political thought on the development of Arab nationalist ideas. The Soviet Encyclopaedia and also a recent history textbook (MODERN HISTORY OF THE COUNTRIES OF NON-SOVIET ASIA AND AFRICA, 1959) have each a short paragraph on the "bourgeois enlightenment movement" of Butrus al-Bustani and Nasif al-Yaziji in the 1860s; but no adequate Soviet account of this movement has yet been given. Soviet writers presumably wish to avoid having to give any credit to Western progressive ideas. Ye.A. Belyayev, indeed, takes issue with Philip Hitti on this point, in a review of Hitti's THE ARABS: A SHORT HISTORY (KRATKIYE SOOBSHCHENIYA INSTITUTA VOSTOKOVEDENIYA, Vol.14). Belyayev denounces Hitti's claim that French influence made possible the awakening of the Arab East through missionaries, doctors, teachers and travellers who introduced European and American culture; the latter, he says, were mostly "spies and intelligence agents preparing the ground for territorial conquests". He also sharply denounces Hitti's claim that Arab nationalism owed much to European and American ideas; in the present conditions of the anti-imperialist struggle in the Arab countries, he says, such a notion could only "further the activity of imperialist and local reaction".

Recently, however, Soviet scholars seem to have become aware of the need to present a Soviet version of the history of the Lebanese and Syrian independence movements; and four studies on this subject, by different authors and dealing with different periods from the early 19th century to 1946, were published in STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES (Moscow University Press, 1959). These Soviet writers are at one in presenting Lebanese and Syrian independence as a purely indigenous growth - except of course where it received inspiration from Russia, that is to say from the Russian Revolutions of 1905-7 and 1917. (It is hoped to give an account of these studies in a future issue of the MIZAN NEWSLETTER - Ed.)

The Lebanese economy Soviet accounts represent the Lebanon as a "backward agricultural country". Much is said on the subject of agricultural poverty. S.N. Bondarev (ARABS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, 1957) says that most of the cultivated land is in the hands of only a few feudal landowners; that tenant farmers surrender up to three-quarters of their crop as rent, and that many landowners still exact the ashar or tithe of the crop, although this was long ago abolished by law; that the tobacco cultivators are shamelessly exploited, since the landlords sell the crop for twice what they give the cultivators for it; and that in 1954 the net annual income of nine-tenths of the peasant families of the Lebanon was not more than 500 Lebanese pounds per family, which was not enough to keep one person for half the year. The subject of agrarian reform in the Lebanon has received some attention in the Soviet Union. M.F. Gataullin's

AGRARIAN RELATIONS IN SYRIA (1957) leaves the Lebanon largely out of account, but the author makes wide use of articles in the Lebanese "progressive" monthly AT-TARIQ on the subject of agrarian relations in both the Lebanon and Syria. More recently SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK (No.5 of 1959) published an article by V. Yemel'yanov on "The Agrarian Question in the Lebanon". According to official Lebanese statistics, he says, 171 persons with holdings of over 10 hectares own half the cultivated land of the Lebanon. But this, he complains, disguises the true situation, since most of these 171 have holdings of under 20 hectares, and a small number have up to 100 hectares, while the rest of the land is in the hands of "all-powerful semi-feudal families" some of whose properties can be measured in tens of thousands of hectares. It is these big landlords, he says, with their great political influence, who prevent the solution of the agrarian problem. "But in recent years the Lebanese peasants have become more politically conscious and organized, and have intensified their struggle for democratic changes in the countryside. More and more frequently the working peasants together with the workers come forward in struggle for the strengthening of national independence and social progress."

Exploitation by the landowners, Soviet writers allege, is aggravated by the rapacity of foreign monopolist concerns such as the Regie de Tabac which pays the peasants a miserable pittance for their tobacco crops and makes an exorbitant profit on the processed article. Bondarev (loc. cit.) says that although the Regie de Tabac was declared a State monopoly in 1952, French capital continues to dominate it. I. Andreyev ("US Monopolies in the Lebanon", SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK No. 7 of 1958) says that this concern has been only "formally nationalized" and that US tobacco companies have a principal interest in it.

Soviet writers are at pains to emphasize the extent of foreign investment and influence in the Lebanese economy in general. The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia says that nine-tenths of all capital invested in the Lebanon belongs to US, British and French monopolies. It is commonly asserted that "imperialist rule" has held back economic development, and that heavy industry is only "weakly developed". In COUNTRIES OF THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST (Tashkent 1958) it is stated that although deposits of iron ore, coal copper, lead and asphalt have been discovered, the mineral and mining industry has been neglected. Andreyev speaks of vast profits gained by US companies in their operations in the Lebanon, and notably by the Tapline Company; this company, he says, receives from 75m. to 90m. dollars profit annually from its pipeline operations, and only pays the Lebanon 1,250,000 dollars for rent and the security of the pipeline.

US aid to the Lebanon is another object of condemnation. Andreyev says that the World Bank's loan for the Litani river project amounts to "barefaced plundering of the Lebanese people", since the 4.75 per cent interest on the loan will mean the payment of over 19m. dollars in interest over a 20-year period.

According to Soviet accounts, Lebanese workers are paid starvation wages and work up to 14 hours a day, instead of the eight hours prescribed by the law. Bondarev says that the Lebanese trade unions "lead the struggle of the Lebanon's workers for improvement of their economic situation and for political rights". The political activity of the trade unions, however, is that most emphasized in Soviet accounts. For example, the 1959 Annual of the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia notes that the trade union federation of Tripoli and Northern Lebanon - affiliated to the Federation of Arab Trade Unions - supported the revolt against President Chamoun's Government.

Government and people The achievement of Lebanese independence is represented by Soviet writers as the result of a struggle by the masses; but Lebanese Government policy after independence is depicted as anti-popular. In particular, it is noted that the Communist Party of the Lebanon, which supported the national stand on independence in 1944, was suppressed together with other "democratic organizations" in January 1948. The Soviet Encyclopaedia says that, on the orders of the Minister of the Interior, the police fired on striking tobacco workers in June 1946, and that in May 1947 "the ruling clique rigged the parliamentary elections by means of terror and violence". (Andreyev says that in the elections of summer 1957 "the Tapline Company, the Four Point aid administration and the US Embassy in Beirut openly bribed voters, thus collecting votes for the candidates agreeable to themselves".) The general contention is that, in the years following independence, the Lebanese Government and economy came increasingly under Western and particularly US influence.

The Lebanon is described in the Soviet Encyclopaedia as, constitutionally, a "bourgeois parliamentary republic"; and there has been no direct statement by Soviet writers that it should be otherwise. In THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE STATES OF THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST (Moscow, 1956), however, I.D. Levin observes: "Democratic elements have hitherto been weakly represented in parliament, seeing that the electoral machinery is substantially in the hands of the administration, the local feudal leaders, the heads of religious communities and the trading and banking capitalist leadership." Since 1955, in fact, a distinction has been drawn between big bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie in the Lebanon; the former are said to have collaborated with the French, and to have Western (and now pro-American) sympathies; that latter are said to have participated in the movement for independence and are now looked to as providing opposition to political association with the West.

Bondarev (op. cit.), in a chapter entitled "The Struggle for the Strengthening of the Lebanon's Independence", gives a detailed account of anti-Western manifestations, and of such pro-Communist initiatives as the "peace movement", in the Lebanon in 1946-56; and he seeks to show that these have exercised effective pressure on the Lebanese Government itself. He speaks of popular opposition to Lebanese participation in the Korean War in 1950 and in the proposed Middle East Command in 1951, and of demonstrations against Iraq's alliance with Turkey and Pakistan in 1955. He

gives an account of protest movements of workers and peasants against foreign monopolies and American influence; the formation of a "committee for struggle against the American Tapline Company" in Sidon, as a result of which "Lebanese patriots" cut the pipeline so as to deny oil to US warships; and the formation of a students' organization in the American University of Beirut called Al-Arwah al-Wuthqah, opposing participation in Western pacts and "demanding that the university should be transformed from a centre of US propaganda in the Middle East into a scientific and cultural centre promoting the development of the national economy and culture of the Arab peoples".

The Eisenhower doctrine Bondarev notes that in autumn 1956 the Lebanese Government did in fact comply with the people's insistence on solidarity with Egypt by refusing to allow warships of the Western powers to visit the port of Beirut; but, he observes, the Government of Rashid Karame and Abdullah Yafi had to resign in November 1956 to make way for the Government of Sami as-Sulh "which reflected the interests of the comprador bourgeoisie"; and it was this Government which in 1957 declared the Lebanon's adherence to the Eisenhower doctrine.

Soviet support for the opposition to Sami as-Sulh's Government, following its acceptance of the Eisenhower doctrine, was soon expressed. In INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS of May 1957 T. Kolesnichenko quoted Abdullah al-Yafi as saying that the Eisenhower doctrine was "a disguised military pact" which isolated the Lebanon from the other Arab States; and it was noted that Opposition deputies had formed a National Front to demand a neutral foreign policy, failing which they would "take such measures as the country's interests demand".

Further Soviet support for the Lebanese Opposition was expressed following the elections of June 1957. An article by N. Ognev in SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK of August 1957 cited Opposition charges that the June elections had been rigged and that the resulting parliament did not express the will of the people; and it presented the whole matter in the context of Lebanese popular indignation at the Government's acceptance of the Eisenhower doctrine in March. Just before the elections, said Ognev, Higgins, the head of a special Eisenhower doctrine of experts, had arrived in Beirut; dollars and US arms began to make their appearance; and the arms were used for shooting down peaceful demonstratiors in Beirut, whose only crime was to protest against the Eisenhower doctrine and demand a policy of positive neutrality and friendship with the Arab States. The Opposition deputy Rashid Karame, said Ognev, was right in declaring: "With the end of the elections the struggle has not ended. The struggle has only begun! This is a liberation struggle, not an electoral one. The people has shown that it does not submit to the dollar and that it is not afraid of the US Sixth Fleet." Before the Government of Sami as-Sulh and Charles Malik came to power, said Ognev, the Lebanese Government had for some years pursued a policy of positive neutrality, in common with the other independent Arab States, decisively rejecting the Baghdad Pact and other imperialist projects.

The rising and the new Government In view of the above, it is not surprising that Soviet solidarity with the Lebanese rising of May 1958 was promptly expressed, and that it was exclusively represented as an anti-Western and particularly anti-American movement. In SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK of June 1958 T. Serezhin siad that the journalist Nasib Matni, whose murder provoked the original disturbances, had been marked down for having "unmasked the aggressive character of the Eisenhower doctrine". From the very first days, said Serezhin, the people's rising had assumed an anti-imperialist and anti-American character; US information offices had been damaged, and in Tripoli the Iraq Petroleum Company's pipeline had been blown up. Serezhin noted Arab expressions of appreciation for the Tass statement warning the Western Powers against "any attempts to use internal events in the Lebanon as a pretext for intervention".

From the time of the American landings until the formation of the new Lebanese Government under Rashid Karame there was little Soviet comment on the internal situation in the Lebanon, but there were frequent indignant articles denouncing the intervention as an aggression and a threat to peace and presenting the Soviet Union as the champion of Arab independence. Rashid Karame's Government, however, was immediately hailed as one which would "show the door to the American invaders" (NEW TIMES No. 40 of 1958); and approval was expressed for this Government's reaffirmation of the principles of Lebanese neutrality laid down in the National Covenant of 1943. At the same time it was stated that Gen. Shihab's election as President "upset America's plans to maintain Chamoun and his cohorts in power".

An article in MIROVAYA EKONOMIKA I MEZHDUNARODNAYA OTNOSHENIYA of January 1960, by V. Viktorov and I. Sashko, gives the Soviet view of the Lebanese Government's record to date, and it is a markedly favourable one. According to this, the new Government has returned to the policy of positive neutrality and has "taken steps to reduce the political and economic dependence of the Lebanon on the Western powers". As instances of this the authors cite the following: Rashid Karame's declaration in December 1958 that his Government does not consider itself bound by the Eisenhower doctrine; the new financial agreement with France concluded in June 1959 limiting the rights of French companies in the Lebanon; discussions on the revision of the agreement with Tapline; and the revision of the agreement with the Iraq Petroleum Company in June 1959, increasing the payments made by the company to the Government. On the latter topic the authors observe: "Negotiations with the company had been conducted since 1952; the anti-popular Government of Shamun was not in a position to champion the national interests of the country in the face of the oil companies with the necessary firmness."

Lebanese abstention from the anti-Communism of the UAR is also noted with approval. The authors remark: "The Lebanese Government has refrained from participation in the anti-Iraq and anti-Communist campaign developed by the West and by some reactionary circles in the Arab countries - a campaign which has the aim of discrediting the progressive forces in the Arab

countries and also the democratic measures undertaken by the Government of the Iraqi Republic."

It would thus appear that, at present, Soviet writers are content to advocate progressive dissociation of the Lebanon from Western influence, and to express support for the Lebanese Government in so far as they consider it to be bringing this about.

The Lebanon and the Soviet Union In their accounts of the Lebanon's independence struggle, Soviet writers emphasize whereever possible the support it has received from the Soviet Union. Thus it is affirmed that the liberation of the Lebanon in 1941 was only achieved thanks to the heroic struggle of the Russian Army against the Germans, which obliged the latter to concentrate their forces on the Eastern front; and it is claimed that the French occupation forces were finally withdrawn from the Lebanon in 1946 only as a result of the stand taken by the Soviet Union in the Security Council.

Equally, the post-war growth of pro-Soviet sentiment in the Lebanon is emphasized in Soviet accounts of the political scene. The early emergence and considerable activity of the peace partisans movement is noted. The Soviet Encyclopaedia (1954) speaks of the "semi-legal" activity of the WFTU-affiliated trade union body, the Federation of Democratic Trade Unions. (The 1959 Annual of the Encyclopaedia, however, makes no mention of Communist-front trade unions in the Lebanon.) The activity of the Society for Cultural Relations between Lebanon and the Soviet Union, and of its president Georges Hanna, has received due notice. It is interesting to note that the latter, in an article on Lebanese-Soviet cultural relations in SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK No.6 of 1957, was able to comment on the "insufficiently serious attention" hitherto given by the USSR to the development of these relations - a failing which he attributed to the "policy of reserve" maintained prior to the XXth CPSU Congress.

Soviet accounts of the "national liberation struggle" in the Lebanon lay emphasis on the impetus given to it by the Lebanese Communist Party (during much of this period, the Communist Party of Syria and the Lebanon). The Party is however presented as working for joint aims together with a national front of progressive forces; and it has received little or no mention in recent articles on the Lebanese political scene. Its Secretary, Nikola Shawi (who attended the XXIst Congress of the CPSU in Moscow in February 1959) published an article on "The Lebanese people's fight against imperialism and reaction" in SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK No.6 of 1959. A recent account of the activities of Eastern Communist Parties (SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK No.3 of 1960) indignantly denounced the measures taken against the Communists in Syria, but made no mention of the Lebanese Communists.

Soviet writers say much about the benefits of existing Lebanese-Soviet trade agreements and about the prospects for their further development. Bondarev (loc. cit.) speaks of the assistance which Soviet deliveries can

give to the promotion of a Lebanese heavy industry, and notes the welcome given by the Lebanese press to a Soviet technical mission which in 1956 offered the Lebanese Government technical and financial aid in carrying out projects for oil prospecting and production, setting up factories and port installations. However, in the absence of any larger initiatives, Soviet writers have subsequently confined themselves to expressing appreciation of the Lebanese Government's extension of existing trade agreements.

A LEBANESE WRITER'S MEMORIES OF RUSSIA

As an outstanding product of the schools of the Russian Palestine Society, which are mentioned in the above article, Soviet writers can point to the Lebanese author Mikhail Naymeh. To mark Naymeh's recent 70th birthday SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK of March 1960 published an article by D. Yusupov giving a short biography of this Lebanese writer and an account of the influence of Russia on his views and writings.

According to this account, Mikhail Naymeh was born on 22nd November 1889 in the small town of Biskint, in the mountain region of the Lebanon. His family was not a rich one. In 1895 the Palestine Society opened a Russian school in Biskint, which Mikhail and his two elder brothers began to attend. In 1902 the school sent him, as one of its most promising pupils, to the teachers' college in Nazareth; and four years later the Society sent him to study in Russia, in the seminary of Poltava. For taking part in a strike of students in 1909 and for making a speech he was suspended for a year, together with other students. In 1911 he passed his diploma examinations and returned to the Lebanon.

In his autobiography, says Yusupov, Naymeh writes with warm affection of his years in Russia. He read Russian literature voraciously, and in less than a year mastered the Russian language so that he was able to write verses in it. On returning to his country he was struck above all by "the literary backwardness of the whole Arab-speaking world", which had the most depressing effect on one who was familiar with the moving lyrics of Pushkin and Lermontov, the pathos of Gogol, the powerful realism of Tolstoy and, in Naymeh's words, "the deep humanity of the most powerful and moving of Russian writers, Dostoyevskiy".

Brought up on Russian literature, Naymeh was profoundly indebted to it for his views on the role and importance of culture in the life of the people. After many perplexities, falling under the influence first of symbolism and then of mysticism, Naymeh finally saw his task as the realistic representation of the life of the common people; and in his collection of stories published in Beirut in 1956 he brings to life for the reader the simple but arduous life of Arab countrymen and townspeople. An earlier story, one of a collection published in 1937, is the writer's

protest against the mass emigration of Lebanese to America. Its hero, a Lebanese peasant who has emigrated to America, complains bitterly of the promised happiness that he does not find there. "What am I today? Once I was strong, broad-chested and manly. I was master in my own home, in the fields, in the garden, loved by neighbours and respected by fellow-villagers. Now I am like a prisoner, chained to a huge wheel...I feel more insignificant than the smallest screw in the body of this hellish machine."

In 1956 Naymeh revisited Russia, and wrote a book about it on his return. He wrote enthusiastically about Russian life today, and, says Yusupov, denounced as senseless "the struggle of reactionary forces against Communism". He praised the absence of class distinctions in Russia: "it is difficult to distinguish the peasant from the worker, and the worker from the engineer, the lawyer or indeed the intellectual in general."

The educative activities of Russia in the Arab world today are predominantly scientific rather than cultural. But the example of Mikhail Naymeh is a reminder that there is a living tradition of cultural association between Russia and the Arab countries, an effective revival of which is becoming increasingly feasible.

SOVIET ANGLE ON THE NEWS

Mikoyan's visit to Iraq Soviet press reports on the eight-day visit to Iraq of the Soviet First Vice-Premier are reviewed in an appendix to this issue.

The situation of the trade unions in Iraq On 8th April TRUD published a letter from a Basrah trade unionist who signed himself "Hafiz Muhammad A."; he said that "the situation in Basrah is such that I cannot give my full name". He began by recalling the support given to the revolutionary regime by the 12,000 members of the port workers' and oil workers' trade unions of Basrah, and went on:

> "Recently our trade unions have been living through difficult days. The oil company has begun a gradual dismissal from work of trade union activists. A lying accusation was fabricated against members of the trade union committee of the oil workers of Basrah. They arrested them and sent them to prison. Later activists of the port workers' union were subjected to repressions. The premises of this union were closed and its documents were confiscated. A raid was carried out on the branch of the Union of Democratic Youth. By the middle of March the number of dismissed workers reached 410, and the number of those arrested was over 100.

"We regard these actions as intrigues of the oil company, of foreign agents and of enemies of the republic, of whom there are still not a few in our town, and we consider that this does damage to the interests of the people. For this reason we have sent a delegation to Baghdad to inform the Iraqi public and official circles of the situation in Basrah."

However, the writer went on, a new wave of arrests had begun in the second half of March, among persons who had declared their support of the Basrah trade union leadership. In Baghdad the president of the trade union federation, Ash-Shukr, had been dismissed from work and was only reinstated after some days. There had been dismissals and arrests among workers of the vegetable oil and match factories. The writer concluded: "I have written you this letter so that you may know the conditions in which we have to live and work, and the bitter character of the struggle against reactionary forces in our country."

The Cleopatra affair The picketing of the UAR vessel Cleopatra in Yew York, the protests made by the UAR authorities and the counter-action threatened by the International Federation of Arab Trade Unions were the subject of a report, without comment, in TRUD of 30th April, under the heading "An unfriendly action against the UAR".

King Husayn's visit to Tehran PRAVDA VOSTOKA of 9th April published an article by the Tass observer P. Egorov on King Husayn's visit to Tehran. It was evident from press reports, said Egorov, that the purpose of King Husayn's visit was to prepare the ground for Jordan's adherence to CENTO. This constituted "a new threat to the freedom and independence of the peoples of the East".

Turkey The news that an exchange of visits between Menderes and Khrushchev had been agreed upon, and that Menderes was to visit Moscow in July, was published in Soviet newspapers on 12th April, and the official Turkish statement explaining the aims of the exchange of visits was published on the following day. Soviet newspapers quoted at length from Turkish newspaper articles welcoming the forthcoming visits as a step towards improving Turkish-Soviet relations.

Reports on the disturbances in Turkey were published in Soviet newspapers on 29th April and subsequent days. They were given no particular prominence, and no comments were published.

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APPENDIX

Mikoyan's Visit to Iraq

The visit to Iraq of the Soviet First Vice-Premier A.I. Mikoyan, who opened the Soviet industrial exhibition in Baghdad on 10th April, has been a milestone in the development of Soviet-Iraqi economic relations. Mikoyan's visit in itself served to focus attention on the scale and progress of Soviet initiatives in Iraq; and the Soviet press made use of the visit to review the prospects for Soviet-Iraqi economic cooperation.

In an article on Mikoyan's visit in NEW TIMES No.16 of 1960 G. Drambyants fills in the picture of Soviet aid to Iraq whose bare outlines were contained in the Soviet-Iraqi economic and technical co-operation agreement of 16th March 1959 (MIZAN NEWSLETTER No.5 of 1959, pp.12-13). The first Soviet undertaking mentioned by Drambyants is the projected sulphur and sulphuric acid factory:

> "The first thing that strikes the eye at Kirkuk, the big oil centre, are the bright flames of burning sulphur gas, a by-product of oil. The British-owned Iraq Petroleum Company, to which the Kirkuk wells belong, is perfectly satisfied to see valuable sulphur gas go up in flames. The Government of the Iraqi Republic is not, and it is going to put up a big sulphur plant at Kirkuk, designed by Soviet technicians."

Other Soviet projects mentioned by Drambyants are the nitrogen fertilizer factory to be built on the Shatt al-Arab near Basrah ("It will use local raw materials and produce enough fertilizer to enable Iraq to export it to other parts of Asia"); the agricultural machinery works at Iskandariyah ("Its annual capacity is 30,000 units, plus spare parts and tools"); the iron and steel works to be built near Baghdad; the Samarra pharmaceutical and antibiotics factory; the new water system for the town of Samarra; and the "plan for comprehensive utilization of the Tigris and Euphrates waters". On the latter subject Drambyants speaks as if Iraq's irrigation problems, and in particular the problem of soil salinity, were only now, under Soviet guidance, being effectively tackled.

Mikoyan's visit was extensively publicized in Soviet newspapers. The following account of his activities, following his arrival on 8th April, is based on Soviet press reports, and omits the more purely formal functions.

10.4.60 Mikoyan called on Ministers of the Iraqi Government. The Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke to him of Iraq's foreign policy aims of positive neutrality and strengthening peace and the country's national independence;

and Mikoyan assured him of the Soviet Union's support for this peace-loving and independent policy. The Minister of Finance and acting Minister of Industry Muhammad Hadid spoke of Iraq's projected new industrial undertakings, which will make the country self-sufficient in many goods formerly imported and will make possible the better exploitation of the country's rich natural resources, and spoke also of the important role in this respect of the Soviet-Iraqi agreements. The Minister of Planning Tal'at ash-Shaybani spoke of the aid given by the Soviet Union in training Iraqi technical specialists. The Minister of Trade Abd al-Latif ash-Shawwaf spoke of the satisfactory contacts established with Soviet foreign trade organizations.

11.4.60 The Minister of the Interior Ahmad Muhammad Yahya and the Minister of Resettlement and Works Awni Yusif accompanied Mikoyan on a visit to villages, to see the first results of the agrarian reform. They first visited a new State farm and model village and later the village of Haswa near Hillah, in a district where part of the landlords' holdings had already been confiscated. (The PRAVDA correspondent Demchenko explained in his dispatch that "the execution of the reforms is still far from completed"; about a quarter of the land earmarked for confiscation had so far been taken from the landowners, and the peasants had so far only received land which formerly belonged to the State.) At Haswa Mikoyan asked whether cooperative farming had been introduced; he was told that there were "some forms of cooperation" - for example, the peasants jointly purchased machines and seeds.

In the afternoon Mikoyan opened the Soviet industrial exhibition. The IZVESTIYA correspondent Kondrashov in his account of the exhibition emphasized that its exhibits were a demonstration not only of Soviet scientific and industrial achievements but also of the extent to which the Soviet Union was prepared to share these with Iraq. In some cases other countries might offer similar equipment - medical equipment, for instance; but the medical equipment stand at the exhibition was a reminder of the selfless work of 33 Soviet medical workers who in three months vaccinated 80 per cent of the population of Iraq - whereas the staff of one American hospital in Iraq had left the country immediately after the revolution "not forgetting to take their instruments and equipment with them".

In the evening Mikoyan visited the site of Babylon.

12.4.60 In the morning Mikoyan visited the State Historical Museum in Baghdad. In the afternoon Mikoyan visited the State oil refinery at Dora near Baghdad. In his speech he said that Iraqis could be justly proud that they were now the masters of the refinery "and yourselves direct it, whereas previously you were not allowed access to it". Of the former "foreign specialists", Mikoyan said that he wished to say nothing to their detriment; they worked honestly. "But their main interest was to receive high wages. Of course, all workers must receive wages. But for us the main thing is to serve the cause of the Iraqi revolution, the cause of the

people." During the past year 24 Soviet specialists had been working in the refinery; there were now only nine, and they would be able to leave soon; "the sooner you can manage without their assistance, the more pleased both we and you will be."

13.4.60 In the morning Mikoyan visited the State railway workshops and engine repair depot. He went on to the offices where Soviet specialists are working on the plans for reconstruction of the Baghdad-Basrah line. At the trade union premises he met the vice-chairman of the union and expressed keen interest in the activity of the union and the life of the workers; and in the course of his speech in reply to a speech of welcome by the Director-General of State Railways he said that it was particularly important that in a predominantly agricultural country there should be a strong detachment of the working class.

Later Mikoyan visited irrigation works at Musaib, south of Baghdad.

In the evening Mikoyan met representatives of Iraqi business circles. A useful exchange of views took place on the possibilities for the further development of trade between Iraq and the Soviet Union.

14.4.60 Mikoyan went in his aircraft to Basrah, where he inspected the port, saw units of the Iraqi Navy, visited the Iraqi 15th Brigade, went down the Shatt al-Arab on the Iraqi yacht Revolution, and saw the site of the new dockyard to be built with Soviet assistance. The IZVESTIYA correspondent Kondrashov remarked that since the first days of the revolution the director of the port, Mazhar ash-Shawi, had taken energetic measures for the replacement of British specialists by Iraqis and others; there used to be 125 British specialists, but now only three were left. In May and June of last year 38 Soviet experts had arrived and were employed in dredging work.

The correspondents of both PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA remarked on the "disagreeable impression" made on the visitors by the conduct of the Basrah police, who, according to the IZVESTIYA correspondent, forcibly dispersed enthusiastic welcoming crowds, brutally using their truncheons on them.

15.4.60 Mikoyan attended a large gathering organized by the Iraqi-Soviet Friendship Society, at which both he and Qasim made speeches.

16.4.60 At a press conference for local and foreign correspondents before leaving Baghdad Mikoyan first spoke of the impressions of his visit and then answered questions on the possibility of Khrushchev visiting Iraq; on the USSR's attitude towards Israel and towards the Algerian revolutionaries; and on Soviet aid to the Afra-Asian countries and to Iraq in particular, and on possible Soviet aid to independent Cyprus.

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